

Arts in the Parks

Charlestown State Park Property Profile

Webpage: <http://www.in.gov/dnr/parklake/2986.htm>

Key Messages/Stories:

- Charlestown State Park was established in 1995. The park's 5,118 acres include 4,756 acres transferred from the U.S. Army and 362 acres purchased from private owners, making it the third largest state park.
- Cultural History of the Area – The Portersville Bridge was built in 1912 by the Vincennes Bridge Company. It was located across the East Fork of the White River between Dubois and Daviess Counties. The process of rehabbing the bridge began in 2010 and the project completed in early summer 2011.
- Rose Island is now available to visitors since the relocation of the Portersville Bridge. At the turn of the 20th century, Rose Island amusement park attracted visitors from all over the Midwest. Many made the 90-minute trip by riverboat from Louisville for 90¢. Current features on Rose Island include trails and interpretive signage. From 1940–1995, the park land was part of the Indiana Army Ammunition Plant, which totaled approximately 15,000 acres. Before the establishment of the plant, most of what was to become the park was used for farmland or pasture.
- Natural beauty – Charlestown State Park is remarkable for its varied topography of gently rolling highlands and heavily wooded steep ravines. Rock outcroppings, scenic Fourteenmile Creek, and high quality woodlands make this an important addition to the state park system. Within the park is a well-known geologic formation known colloquially as the Devil's Backbone. It is actually a hogback ridge unique because two different bodies of water formed it. Fourteenmile Creek cut the north side while the south face was formed by the Ohio River. The park offers rich habitat for both plants and animals. Several rare and endangered plant species as well as numerous areas displaying abundant high quality wildflowers complement diverse animal life found here.

Top Five Things to Do:

- Drive to the overlooks and boat ramp on the Ohio River
- Hike trail 3 to visit Rose Island
- Stay in the campground one of two state parks with full hook up sites
- Hike trail 6 for scenic river overlooks, old lime kilns, and the Charlestown Landing site
- Fishing on Fourteenmile Creek and the Ohio River

Lodging: Campground with electric and full hook up sites

General visitor profile: Campers (weekends or weeklong); day-users for picnics and hiking; school groups in spring/summer/fall; scouts and other groups for volunteer service; fishermen and women.

Potential arts venues: Various shelter houses



- Clark Shelter: open shelter, capacity 120, electricity, water, compost toilet nearby.
- Oak Shelter: open shelter, capacity 48, electricity, water, compost toilet nearby.

Visitation in FY2014: 250,000

Nearby Communities: Charlestown, Jeffersonville, Clarksville

Please email questions to Artsintheparks@dnr.IN.gov.

